

An early acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures recommended

IN A

SERMON

In behalf of the

WALWORTH

CHARITY AND SUNDAY-SCHOOLS FOR POOR BOYS;

Preached at

MR. BOOTH'S MEETING-HOUSE,

LITTLE PRESCOT-STREET,

LONDON,

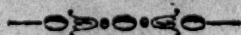
August 13, 1797;

By the Rev. SAMUEL PEARCE, A. M.

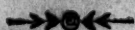
Published for the benefit of the Society.

Clipstone,

PRINTED BY J. W. MORRIS;



Sold by M. GURNEY, Holborn-Hill; BUTTON, Paternoster-Row; GARDINER, Princes-Street, Cavendish Square, London; JAMES, Bristol; and BELCHER, Birmingham.



PRICE ONE SHILLING.

1800.



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Sermon, as the title-page informs the reader, was delivered in the summer of 1797. The Managers of the Charity at that time requested it to be printed. The author, through his numerous engagements, was not able to write it till he considered it as out of season. The manuscript was found among his papers after his decease, and presented to the Gentlemen who first moved for its being printed; and who, judging that it might be grateful to Mr. Pearce's friends, and advantageous to the Charity, were still of the same mind. The whole, except pp. 30—33, enclosed in crotchets, was copied out for the press by the author. Those pages have been added, partly from some rough notes which accompanied the manuscript, by another hand.

An early acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures

RECOMMENDED IN

A

SERMON.

2 Tim. iii. 15.

AND THAT FROM A CHILD THOU HAST KNOWN THE
HOLY SCRIPTURES, WHICH ARE ABLE TO MAKE
THEE WISE UNTO SALVATION, THROUGH
FAITH WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS.

REVERENCE for divine revelation hath
been in every period a discriminating charac-
teristic of good men. In the early ages of the
Jewish church, when, as yet, neither the de-
votional compositions of David, nor the sub-
lime productions of succeeding prophets, had
enriched the sacred page, — “In those days
“ the word of the Lord was precious.”

The royal Psalmist, not only possessed of
the writings of Moses, but being also illumi-
nated with the spirit of wisdom, and enrapt-
ured with the spirit of grace, exclaims, “O
“ how I love thy law! It is my meditation
“ day and night: I esteem thy statutes above

B

“ gold, yea more than fine gold: my soul
“ breaketh for the longing it hath to thy
“ judgments at all times: they are sweeter
“ than honey or the honey comb.”

Nor is it matter of surprize, when we reflect, that all the moral difference between the king of Israel, and the princes of the heathen, with their respective subjects, arose from this one thing;—the heathen were without any means of religious instruction, save the book of nature, and the traditions of their fathers; which, flowing through polluted channels age after age, were at length wholly corrupted, and rather tended, like clouds of darkness, to vail the true knowledge of God, than, like mirrors, faithfully to exhibit him; whilst the Jews above all other nations were chosen to hear his voice, to know his will, and preserve his truth until the great Prophet of the church should come to lead the nations into all truth. Of this privilege Moses with peculiar solemnity reminds the posterity of Abraham, Deut. iv. 32. “ For ask now of the
“ days that are past, which were before thee,
“ since God created man upon the earth; and
“ ask from one side of heaven to the other,
“ whether there has been any such thing as
“ this great thing is, or hath been heard like
“ it; Did ever people hear the voice of God

“ speaking out of the midst of fire as thou
“ hast heard, and live? ”

To form a true idea of the advantages derived from revelation in this its infant state, let us only go through the heathen world, and mark the worship and manners of different nations. Here you see “ Women (lost to all “ sense of decency) weeping for Thammuz; ” —there, the beastly group celebrating the accursed orgia of Bacchus:—In one place, mothers casting their own children into the arms of a brazen, burning statue, in honor of Molock; in another, the priests of Baal cutting and tearing their own bodies “ with lances and knives, and crying (in vain) Oh Baal, hear us! ” Then turn your eyes to *Jerusalem*, the city of God, walk about Zion, mark well her solemn rites, and listen to her songs: No idol deity is seen within her temple; on her altar no human blood is spilt: un sullied chastity is demanded of her priests, and enjoined on all her worshippers. Examine the laws by which their celestial sovereign rules them; this is their epitome, “ Thou shalt love the “ Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy “ neighbor as thyself. ” And now judge whether every holy mind had not reason to rejoice in God’s testimonies.

When our blessed Savior appeared in the world, though he made so ample a revelation of divine truth, yet he spake with the highest respect of the Old Testament writings, and constantly appealed to them as containing those principles on which his own dispensation was founded, and those predictions of himself which served to demonstrate beyond contradiction the divinity of his mission. "Search the scriptures (said Jesus:) in them ye think ye have eternal life, and these are they that testify of me."

It is of these scriptures that the apostle speaks in my text, as being known to Timothy from his early years, through the advantages of a pious education; for we find by the first chapter that his maternal ancestors for two generations were numbered with the faithful.

In our text, and its connexion, the apostle commends the scriptures to our regard on three accounts:—

First, *The divinity of their origin*, ver. 16. — "They are given by the INSPIRATION OF GOD."

Secondly, *The purity of their nature*, — "The HOLY scriptures;" which, like their

divine author, are pure light, and in them is no darkness at all.

Thirdly, Their *beneficial tendency*,—"Able to make thee WISE UNTO SALVATION."

It has indeed been questioned, whether the latter excellency attributed to the scriptures be justly spoken of the writings of the *Old Testament only*; for if *they* were *alone* able to make us wise unto salvation, What necessity could there be for the additional books of the *new*? This is not a season for controversy. One remark only I would make;—The apostle connects *faith in Christ* with a knowledge of the Old Testament; "through faith which is in Christ Jesus." Now that same faith into which Timothy was initiated, the New Testament exhibits to us; so that we must consider the assertion in the text as relating to the whole revelation of God:—The Scriptures of both Testaments contain truths which instruct us in the way of Salvation.

How great the encomium! Here this sacred volume stands unrivalled. Some books may instruct us how to obtain wealth, others may assist us in maintaining or restoring our health, and others may make us wise to secure

a reputation; but the Bible alone can make us wise to *salvation*.

That man is a sinner, and that his sin diminishes his present enjoyment, and endangers all his future happiness, every conscience witnesses: but whom did the light of nature ever instruct in the way of salvation? Not to appeal to the ignorant Otaheitan, nor to the uncivilized Hottentot, let the interesting inquiry,—What must I do to be saved?—be put to the civilized, the enlightened heathen; to a Tully, or a Socrates; what reply could they have given? Or, to a mind conscious of its depravity, burdened with guilt, tortured with fearful apprehensions of almighty indignation, and panting to know whether its crimes might be forgiven; what peace could they have administered? It is probable they might *conjecture* the fact, but what truly awakened sinner can rest his hopes on a basis so precarious?

But from revelation, from the holy scriptures we obtain the amplest satisfaction on this important subject. Here mercy, heavenly mercy appears with pardons in her hands. Here the God we have offended passeth by us, proclaiming his name, “The Lord God, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin.” Here

we see a thousand sinners like ourselves successfully pleading for forgiveness, or rejoicing in the mercy they have found. "I acknowledged unto thee (saith one) my transgression, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.—I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. Come ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul." Says another, "Behold, for peace I had great bitterness; but thou in love to my soul hast cast all my sins behind thy back:" whilst a third, penetrated with humility, and glowing with gratitude, exclaims, "I was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy!"

In these sacred pages too we find the God of mercy kindly inviting us, guilty as we are, to "come boldly to a throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and obtain grace to help in time of need." Here also the curtain that hides the world of glory from our view, is drawn aside; and in heaven we see an innumerable company of happy saints, once sinners as we are to day, but made perfect now both in purity, and bliss, celebrating the mercy of God in everlasting hymns.

And do the scriptures bring all this to view? Do they lay a foundation on which one so vile as I may securely build my hope of reconciliation to my God?—Blessed volume! I receive thee as the shepherds received the descending angels who brought the glad tidings of a Savior for all people: I receive thee “with fear and great joy,”

Nor is this all: my heart asks another question;—How is this salvation to be obtained? And the holy scriptures afford me all the satisfaction that I desire: they not only point out the object, but also put me in the road, and furnish me with supplies all the way, whilst I am “pressing towards the mark” “for the prize of my high calling.”—“I am the way,” said Jesus the Son of God; “no man cometh unto the Father but by me.” And in perfect unison with the declarations of the master, are those of his inspired servants. “This (they assure me) is “a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the “world to save sinners; that there is a new “and living way consecrated through the “vail, that is to say, his flesh; that he died “for our offences, and rose again for our “justification; and is now exalted to be a “Prince and a Savior, to give repentance

“unto Israel, and remission of sins;” and that, “having suffered, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God, God is just and
“yet the justifier of the ungodly.”

Do I enquire farther, How I am to enjoy a sensible participation of the blessings of salvation? The holy scriptures say, “He
“that *believeth* on the Son hath everlasting
“life.” They teach me that whoever truly and heartily receives the Lord Jesus as exhibited in the gospel, as his infallible teacher, his atoning priest, and rightful sovereign, so as to believe his doctrine, rely on his mediation, and delight in obedience to his laws, shall be saved: and that no sincere enquirer may be at a loss to judge whether he be personally interested in this salvation or not, the holy scriptures declare, that such a dedication of the soul to God being accomplished through his gracious influence upon the heart, will be attended with such an effectual, universal, and abiding change in the feelings, temper, and conduct, that such an one will be, as it were, “a new creature;” that he will henceforth take delight in prayer, and other exercises of religion, mourn over his sins before God, be kind and affectionate to his enemies, prefer the society of the Lord’s people to that of all other men, and be look-

ing with chearful expectation for that “ blessed
“ hope, and the glorious appearing of the
“ great God, and our Savior, Jesus Christ.”
Finally, to encourage every humble follower of
the Lamb, this sacred volume promises support
under every trial, and in every duty; preserva-
tion by the divine power, whilst on earth, and
to crown all at last, the felicity of heaven, con-
sisting in the everlasting deliverance of the
soul from ignorance, guilt, misery, and sin;
and the body from pain, disease, corruption,
and death; all of which shall be enjoyed in the
society of holy angels, the whole company of the
redeemed, and the Lord Jesus himself, in whose
presence there is fulness of joy, and at whose
right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

How desirable is this wisdom which com-
eth down from above! How blessed the man
whose bosom it illuminates, enraptures, and
exalts! All human science must do homage
here. Compared with *this*, all the intelli-
gence which ever enriched the mind, or gave
celebrity to the name of man, is but vanity
and vexation of spirit. “ He that increaseth
“ knowledge increaseth sorrow:” and the fact
is as humiliating as it is notorious, that after
the laborious researches of half a century, the
far greater part of our attainments expires with
our lives; or in the more expressive language

of the apostle, "as for knowledge it shall vanish away;" but this heavenly wisdom, simple and harmonious, though sublime and profound, satisfies, tranquillizes, and abides: accommodated to the capacity of the babe in Christ, and yet fraught with a grandeur and a majesty which command the reverence of the profoundest scholar, and most expansive genius; constraining the simplest disciple to love, and the aged apostle to exclaim, "O the depth! I count all things but loss and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord."

Neither the labors of the historian, the skill of the grammarian, the penetration of the philosopher, nor the acumen of the logician are necessary here. Approach, ye humble peasants! Ye unlettered artificers, approach! Though destitute of literary advantages, unskilled in the cumbrous volumes of antiquity, unacquainted with the effusions of modern times; strangers to all that confers the laurel on the student's brow, even *you* may learn from *the bible* to be "wise unto salvation." It is true, you may meet with prophecies which you may not be able to unfold, and allusions which you are not able to illustrate: but know that to *Salvation*, the knowledge of these is not essential. The truth,

you are to learn, and the precepts you are to obey, are so *legible*, that “he who runs may read;” and so *easy* that a way-faring man though a fool shall not err essentially in understanding them. *One* thing alone is necessary for *all*. We must “be converted, and be—” “come as little children,” before we can understand the things of the kingdom of God. That simplicity of mind which is the offspring of genuine humility is all you want; without this, the philosopher remains (as to the religion of Jesus) a fool; and with it, the most ignorant enquirer shall be made “wise unto salvation.”

Yet easy of acquisition as this wisdom may be, it is not limited in its duration, nor feeble in its influence; like the benevolent institution of SUNDAY SCHOOLS, whereby children the most ignorant and wretched are prepared for activity and usefulness in maturer years, when they may reduce the instructions given them to practice; so, the knowledge of the scriptures is preparatory both to a life of goodness, and a heaven of blessedness. The very truths which are revealed by the scriptures now will be the subjects of our sweetest meditations, and loudest songs, in the heavenly world; and—pardon so humble an allusion, the alphabet we learn in time shall assist us in reading the lessons of eternity.

Who then can begin to acquire this sacred knowledge too soon? It was the privilege of Timothy that "from a *Child* he had known "the holy scriptures." Blessed are the children whose infant minds, like his, are thus illuminated; and blessed are all those who contribute to this salutary illumination!

"To every thing, (saith Solomon) there "is a season:" and surely the time of *youth* is the best, the *proper* season to form an acquaintance with the holy scriptures. Every body knows that the earliest impressions which the mind receives are the most permanent and influential. Proofs of this, each of us has in his own recollection; and may observe in the world at large, by only comparing the present prejudices of men with their respective education. Why is it that so many are at this moment zealous for the religion of Mahommed? Is it not because they were taught from their childhood to venerate the Koran? And would not these have been equally attached to Judaism, had they been educated Jews; or to paganism, had they been brought up with pagans? In our own country do we not see that, in general, children are prejudiced in favor of the opinions of their fathers; and if upon conviction any one recedes from the denomination of his family, is it not with a degree of reluctance

that he follows where even his conscience leads him.

How careful then should we be that the first notions of religion which our children form should be agreeable to the truth as it is in Jesus: and how is it possible to accomplish so noble and important an end, without leading them to an acquaintance with the holy scriptures, that so they may be secured both from the plausible insinuations of the infidel, and the vicious seductions of the licentious in future years?

To the want of this pious care must, in some respects, be attributed that profaneness, sabbath breaking, dishonesty, lewdness, and those other vices, which at once characterize, and disgrace the present times. In days when parents and guardians were not wanting in the duty of scriptural instruction, England had not such crimes so largely to answer for to God; and when we as a people resume these important attentions to the rising generation, the happy fruits will doubtless be soon visible in a general reformation of our corrupted manners.

The influence of a scriptural education extends to all the stages, relations, and circum-

stances of human life; and, like the meandering stream, fertilizes every part through which it flows. This forms the mind for the discharge of social and domestic duties; here the child learns to "obey his parents in all things, because it is right in the Lord;" and when providence shall put him in a parent's place, he is fitted to govern as well as to obey; here the servant is taught diligence, submission, cheerful obedience, and inviolable fidelity to his master; and should he ever become a master himself, to deal kindly and justly by those who serve him: In short, the holy scriptures are calculated for universal "instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

I scarcely need observe, that a pious education is necessary to secure good order in a *body politic*, or in civil life. "This age," says one, "has had notorious evidence of the dreadful barbarism, the wild and desperate impiety, into which an ignorant multitude, unaccustomed to the use and the knowledge of the scriptures, may readily be plunged." Who can recall the horrid scenes of the year EIGHTY in *this metropolis*; and of NINETY-ONE in *Birmingham*; (see a lawless herd composed of our own countrymen and neighbors com-

mitting acts the most violent and base!) Who of us can realize the houses of respectable citizens in flames; nay the houses erected for the worship of God in ruins; whilst we recollect the agitations of our own bosoms, during the transaction of those infamous scenes by a mob, whose minds unstored with sacred knowledge in childhood were ready to perform such infernal projects in their rising years, and not endeavor by every possible mean so to season the minds of the rising generation with pious instruction as shall dispose them at once to execrate the conduct of their ancestors, and secure them from treading in their steps?

In large towns, like this, it should seem of greater importance to the public tranquillity, that children be principled in religion and virtue, than in smaller ones. So depraved is the human heart, that it is far more susceptible of evil than of good impressions; and not only every bad man, but every wicked child hath his circle of influence: now mingling, as youth of both sexes do in this populous city, an *individual* of a corrupted mind may be highly prejudicial to the morals of the rest: but what if the *bulk* be corrupt! How much do those around them need to have their minds fortified to resist the effect of their sinful discourse, and pernicious example? And is it

possible to accomplish this better than by an early initiation into the knowledge of the holy Scriptures?

If we suffer their minds to remain unacquainted with their duty, both to God and their neighbor, let us not expect that we shall be able to repel the charge which a future day may bring against us, that to *us* belongs at least one half of the guilt and shame of all the depredations and miseries that may follow other riots—perhaps more dreadful than the former.

The friends of despotism indeed may oppose, (as some to their everlasting disgrace have done) the instruction of the poor; and contend that mental improvement is inimical to due subordination. To glance at the Bible is to see such unworthy reasoning utterly confuted. Can I become a worse subject of the state, by learning to “Reverence the Powers that be, as the ordinance of God?” Shall I become a worse member of society, by forming an acquaintance with that book which directs me to “Love my neighbor as myself; to forgive injuries; to do good, and communicate; to bless them that curse me, and to overcome evil with good?”

This is not christian patriotism. It may agree with the views of the prophet of Arabia, or the high-priest of Rome; but accords neither with the dictates of right reason, nor the enlarged scheme of christian philanthropy. "Go, preach my gospel to the *poor*," said the Son of God; and "suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not:" nor does that person act like a philanthropist, nor a disciple of Christ, who would draw a veil over the sun of righteousness, and through the pride of learning, or the lust of power, hide the sacred page from human observation.

Deprive a poor man of his Bible, and what upon earth has he left to support him under the labors, and console him amidst the sorrows of life? Compare together two men of equal years, and circumstances,—the one of whom hath been made wise unto salvation, whilst the other remains uninstructed in the sacred page: conceive them both detained from the usual labors and enjoyments of life, either through sickness, or age:—How different are their feelings in afflictive solitude! To the one, "light arises in darkness." I hear him sing, ' Though the fig-tree do not blossom, and there ' be no fruit in the vine; though I walk in ' darkness and pass through the valley of the ' shadow of death, I will fear no evil, but re-

‘ joice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my
‘ falvation.—All things are working together
‘ for my good.—Wifdom and mercy direct all
‘ thefe difpenfations, and HIM who is infinite
‘ in both I humbly call my Father:—he pro-
‘ mifes to give me ftrength equal to my day;
‘ to be with me in every trial; never to leave
‘ me nor forfake me; to guide me by his coun-
‘ fel, and then receive me to glory.—My
‘ flefh and my heart fail, but God is the
‘ ftrength of my heart, and my portion for
‘ ever.’ Happy man! It is good for thee to
be afflicted; but tell me, whence this ftrong
confolation?—From what fource are thy fup-
ports derived? ‘ This is my comfort in my af-
‘ fliction, God’s *word* hath quickened me.’

What a gloomy contrast, my brethren,
doth the ignorant child of sorrow prefent to our
view! To *him* the fpring of confolation is fealed;
he knows not the hand that vifits him; the
love of life, and fear of death, torment his
fpirit, and accelerate the progrefs of his mi-
fery; the dread of an hereafter, for which he is
unprepared, diftracts him; all earthly pleasures
fail him; paff fins ftare him in the face, un-
accompanied with any hope of forgivenefs; he
knows not God, nor Jefus Chrift whom he
hath fent; apprehenfions the moft gloomy prey
upon his heart; till at length, he finks down

in despair, and anticipates the reward of his transgressions, ere he actually receives it.— Miserable man, how calamitous thy lot! My heart bleeds for thine. “ Oh if thou hadst
“ known the things that make for thy peace;
“ but now they are hid from thine eyes! God
“ be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause
“ his face to shine upon us: That thy way may
“ be known upon earth, thy saving health
“ among all nations. Let the people praise
“ thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.”

In the scriptural accounts of persons whom God designed for special service, it is remarkable that many of them were prepared for it in their *youth*. Thus MOSES, the illustrious leader of the Israelitish host, was trained from a child in the Egyptian court, and so fitted for the public character which he afterwards sustained. So SAMUEL, that venerable and disinterested prophet of the Lord, was during his childhood consecrated to Jehovah, and received an early initiation to the services of the sanctuary. JEREMIAH was “ sanctified from the womb;” and TIMOTHY, the colleague of an apostle, “ from a child had known the holy
“ scriptures.”

It must be owned that the youth of Great Britain have had singular advantages for early

information. So far back as the *ninth century*, the justly celebrated ALFRED, it is said, founded public schools; and, as the whole land at that time lay in the profoundest ignorance, so that parents, unacquainted with the advantages of instruction, might be supposed indifferent to the education of their children, this wise legislator, with truly paternal benevolence, enacted a salutary law, whereby citizens, at least of a certain class, were obliged to send their children for public tuition. But the state of the times was not favorable to the preservation of an institution so happily established. It was for the interest of the Clergy to keep the people in ignorance; and, by preventing their personal acquaintance with the scriptures, make them dependant on those whose luxurious tables, and increasing treasures, proved the policy of their system of darkness. However, when it pleased God so far to reform the corruptions of the christian church as to abolish popery in our land, the means of religious information increased: the friends of the Reformation were friends to knowledge; *then* schools were multiplied, and wisdom increased. From that time to the present, considerable attention has been given to youthful instruction, except amongst the children of the poorest class, who unable to satisfy the de-

mands of a tutor, or to dispense with the trifling fruits of their children's labor, were precluded from participating in the spreading benefit, till gracious heaven first put it into the heart of man to establish SUNDAY SCHOOLS; an institution which, being supported by the public, is attended with no expence to the parent; and only demanding the child's attendance on the *Lord's-day*, diminishes nothing from his earnings in the week. Here, religious instruction is imparted: beside which, the day of God is kept from profanation, and care taken that divine worship is duly frequented.

By *this institution*, thousands, who in all probability must otherwise have lived and died in almost savage ignorance, have been prepared for useful and respectable situations in civil life, whilst the hearts of many children have, through the divine blessing following the instructions given them, been impregnated with the seeds of piety, which in maturer age have produced the fruits of righteousness to the glory of God.

But the institution for which I plead, and to support which you are here assembled, not only provides a *Sunday School*, which, with literally *unlimited benevolence*, sets no

bounds to number, but invites to instruction the children of all the poor in its vicinity, and also provides for *twenty poor boys*, as a parent provides for his offspring; or as our heavenly father provides for us all—it provides them not only with instruction for their minds, but raiment for their bodies also. Generous institution! Our hearts are constrained to admiration, and our hands, I trust, will give thee ample aid.

Four years ago, this society first sprung into being chiefly by the exertions of that valuable and lamented minister of Jesus Christ, the late Mr. JOSEPH SWAIN, who with some others of liberal heart, had long perceived the necessity of an institution of this nature in a neighborhood abounding with poor, and enveloped in ignorance. Great have been the exertions of charity in behalf of this School, which, as you will all readily allow, the most economical management cannot support at a less expence than SIXTY POUNDS per annum: It was begun, and at first maintained by private subscriptions; but the necessities of some having compelled them to withdraw their contributions, and providence having removed others, at present little more than half can be depended on; and for the rest we apply to

you. Yes, in the name of all these lads, and in the name of society at large, to whom each one will prove a blessing or a bane, we apply to you.—Is there a heart so stoical as not to feel? Is there a hand so mercenary as not to give?

Soon must these children mingle with the world. Shall they be introduced, as from a den of wild beasts to annoy, or as a flock of harmless sheep to benefit mankind? Shall the pains which have been already taken with them be lost for want of means to repeat them? Shall the opening genius of these lads be nipt in the bud? Shall their parents who look forward to the time, when, detained by infirmity from the sanctuary of God, these their children shall read to them the holy scriptures—their only consolation in the afflictive hour; Shall these be disappointed? Ah, no; I bode better things: already you have formed the pious resolution, (and heaven approves it) that having found so good a thing to do to day, you will do it with all your might, and liberally encourage an institution which, smiling in its infancy, promises abundant good to society in future years.

Sweet are the works of mercy! Oh what avails it that you are clothed in purple and

fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day, if your bosoms remain strangers to the best of joys,—the joy of doing good?

A great philanthropist, and popular writer * once exclaimed,—“ If I may but flatter
“ myself that I have wiped away the tears
“ from the eyes of but one unfortunate fellow
“ creature, such a reflection would wipe away
“ my own in my dying moments.” You, my brethren, have now an opportunity for a work even superior in benevolence to wiping the tear of misery away;—you may keep it from being shed by many an eye, and be the means of preventing the torments of guilt in many an heart; whilst by these efforts of kindness you embalm your memories in the hearts of the youth, whose minds you inform, whose morals you improve, and whose happiness you augment. Yes, when the names of slaughtering conquerors shall be no more admired, but held in universal detestation; and when the memorial of the mere wealthy shall have perished with them, the men of mercy shall be remembered with affectionate respect: altars shall be erected to their virtues; children shall be taught to respect their names, and list out their praises; and distant generations shall weep that their faces are seen on earth no

* Jean Bernardin de St. Pierre.

more. Partial as is our recovery from the illusions of ages when opulence and dominion monopolized respect, we, notwithstanding, find the general sentiment in favor of moral character. Does the mind seek for honor? She finds it in uprightness. Does she enquire for delight? She finds it in benevolence. Ambition is prostrated, and goodness is exalted to the shrine. Your bosoms, brethren, echo to my voice; your feelings justify my assertions. I tell you of ALEXANDER, the wonder of ages, the conqueror of nations, but like most other children of ambition, the butcher of his brother man!—Alexander is *dead*!—Who amongst you becomes his mourner? What heart heaves for him the sigh? What eye drops for him a tear?—But HOWARD! Thy name kindles in every virtuous bosom sensations of affection, astonishment, and regret; thy goodness [how diffusive! Blessed philanthropist! thou needest not a monument to perpetuate thy memory; far as thy name is known it is inscribed in the heart of every friend of man!

But why do I speak of the approbation of creatures? Behold the judge of the universe upon his throne; see all nations assembled before him; hear the sentence that shall eternally fix the states of men, and learn from it the importance of christian benevolence—“ Then

“ shall the king say unto them on his right
“ hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit
“ the kingdom prepared for you from the foun-
“ dation of the world. For I was an hungred
“ and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty and ye
“ gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took
“ me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was
“ sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and
“ ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous
“ answer him saying, Lord, when saw we thee
“ an hungred, and fed thee; or thirsty, and
“ gave thee drink? When saw we thee a
“ stranger, and took thee in; or naked, and
“ clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick,
“ or in prison, and came unto thee? And
“ the king shall answer and say unto them,
“ Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have
“ done it unto one of the least of these my
“ brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

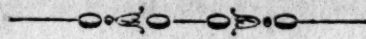
My dear CHILDREN, hearken! If you should, after all, prove indolent, disobedient, or unthankful; if the knowledge communicated to you, should only render you more expert in the service of Satan;—of what account will all these benevolent exertions be to you? They will only heighten your guilt, and augment your misery. The holy scriptures are doubtless an invaluable treasure, and it is the desire of your friends to impart unto you the

key of knowledge: but if it should prove a price in the hand of those who have no heart to get wisdom, though we may enjoy a satisfaction in having done our best, What will become of you? The scriptures are no otherwise *able* to make you wise unto salvation than *through faith which is in Christ Jesus*. Oh believe in his name, and love him in sincerity! Then will you continue to carry on those labours of love towards other poor children when we are in our graves; and when it shall please God to remove you from the present scene of action, you will meet us before the throne, and enter with us into the joy of the Lord.

FRIENDS and BENEFACTORS! We shall meet these children in another world. We shall see some of them, I hope, among the followers of the Lamb: and if so, we shall hear them bless God for having given them the Holy Scriptures, and the means of understanding them. And should we also be of that happy company, the remembrance of having been instrumental in their salvation, will add to the numerous sources of our enjoyment. But let us take heed, lest while we have contributed to make others wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus, we ourselves should have our portion with the

unbelievers. If unhappiness could have place in heaven, surely it would be in the heart of a child saved by means of early instruction, who should see his instructor, or benefactor lost!]

End of the Sermon.



NOTE.

This institution, since August 1797, when MR. PEARCE so ably pleaded for it, has received such aid from occasional collections at Charity Sermons, and from new annual subscribers, as to enable it to increase the number of children in each of the Schools. There are now in the Day-School *thirty* who are not only educated, but annually clothed; and in the Sunday-School upwards of *fifty* who are regularly instructed by some of the managers.

The increase of the Schools rendered it necessary to procure a larger School-room; and the Society, thinking it desirable to pro-

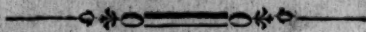
vide, at the same time, a residence for the Master, purchased a house in East-street, Walworth, and vested it in the hands of twelve Trustees, in May 1799; to which they have added a convenient School-room. The expences hereby incurred have been generously defrayed by the liberality of the public.

Subscriptions and Donations will be thankfully received by Mr. JOSEPH TOWLE, *Treasurer*, Saville-Row, Walworth; Mr. W. B. GURNEY, *Secretary*, Keene's-Row, Walworth; and by the Rev. THOMAS HALL, *Master*, at the School-House, No. 28, East-Street, Walworth.



CLIPSTONE: Printed by J. W. MORRIS.

List of Mr. PEARCE's publications.



1. *The Oppressive, Unjust, and Prophane nature and tendency of the Corporation and Test Acts exposed*, in a Sermon preached before the congregation of Protestant Dissenters, meeting in Cannon-street, Birmingham, Feb. 21, 1790. 8vo. pp. 34. Price 6d. Johnson, London.
2. *Reflections on the Character and State of departed Christians*: A Sermon occasioned by the decease of the Rev. CALEB EVANS, D. D. Pastor of the Baptist congregation meeting in Broadmead, Bristol, and senior Tutor to the Baptist academy in that city: Preached in Cannon-street, Birmingham, Sep. 4, 1791. 8vo. pp. 32. Price 6d. Knott, and Button, London.
3. *The Scripture Doctrine of Baptism, with some Historical remarks on that subject*, in a Sermon preached at the Baptist meeting-house, in Harvey-lane, Leicester, April, 20, 1794, and published by unanimous request. 12mo. pp. 56. Price 6d. Button, London.
4. *The Duty of Churches to regard Ministers as the Gift of Christ*: A Sermon delivered at the ordination of Mr. Belcher, to the Pastorate of the Baptist church, meeting in Silver-street, Worcester. 8vo. pp. 64. Price 1s. Button, London; James, Bristol. N.B. This Sermon is accompanied with a *Charge*, delivered on the same occasion, by Dr. Ryland; and an *Introductory Address*, by Mr. G. Osborne.
5. *Motives to Gratitude*: A Sermon delivered to the Baptist congregation, meeting in Cannon-street, Birmingham, on occasion of the Public Thanksgiving, Nov. 29, 1798. 8vo. pp. 24. Price 6d. Button, Matthews, and Knott, London; and Belcher, Birmingham.

Lately Published.

1. *The promised presence of Christ with his people, a source of Consolation under the most painful bereavements:* A Sermon occasioned by the much lamented death of the Rev. SAMUEL PEARCE, late Pastor of the Baptist Church, Cannon-street, Birmingham: By JOHN RYLAND, D. D. To which is prefixed, An Oration delivered at the grave by the Rev. J. Brewer. 8vo. pp. 68. *Second Edition*, Price 1s. Button, London; James, Bristol; and Belcher, Birmingham.
2. *Memoirs of the late Mr. Samuel Pearce of Birmingham; with Extracts from some of his most interesting Letters:* Compiled by Mr. A. FULLER. 8vo. pp. 232. Price three shillings and sixpence. Sold by Button, Gardiner, and Williams, London; James, Bristol; Belcher, Birmingham; and Ogle, Edinburgh.
3. *The dependance of the whole Law and the Prophets on the Two primary Commandments:* A Sermon preached before the Ministers and Messengers of the Baptist Churches belonging to the Western Association, at the annual meeting held in Salisbury, on Thursday, May 31, 1798, and published at their request, by JOHN RYLAND, D. D. Sold by Cottle, Reed, and James, Bristol; and Button, London. Price 6d.
4. *The Gospel its own Witness: or the Holy Nature, and Divine Harmony of the Christian Religion, contrasted with the immorality and absurdity of Deism.* By ANDREW FULLER. *Second Edition*, 8vo. pp. 260. price 5s. Button, Paternoster-Row; Gardiner, Princes-Street, Cavendish Square; Ogle, Great Turn-Style; and Williams, Stationer's Court, London; Ogle, Edinburgh and Glasgow; and James, Bristol.
5. *The Christian doctrine of Rewards:* A Sermon delivered at the Circus, Edinburgh, Oct. 13, 1799, By ANDREW FULLER. 8vo. pp. 28. Price 6d. J. Ogle, and J. Guthrie, Edinburgh; J. and A. Duncan, M. Ogle, and R. Niven, Glasgow; Button, Gardiner, Ogle, and Williams, London.
6. *Periodical Accounts relative to the Baptist Missionary Society:* Volume the First complete. Price 6s. and 6d. in Boards. Button, London.

